

A
S E R M O N
P R E A C H E D
Before the
Q U E E N
A T
W H I T E - H A L L ,

On *Wednesday, March 22. 1692.*
Being the Fourth *Wednesday* in *LENT.*

By *J. L A M B E*, Rector of *Wheathamstead*
in *Hartfordshire*, and Chaplain in Ordinary to
Their M A J E S T I E S *Dean of Ely*

Published by Her Majesty's Special Command.

L O N D O N ,
Printed by *Tho. Warren* for *Walter Kettilby*, at the
Bishop's Head in *St. Paul's Church-Yard*, 1693.

21-12-12

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A
S E R M O N
Preach'd before the
Q U E E N.

2 P E T E R i. 4.

Whereby are given unto us exceeding great and precious promises, that by these ye might be partakers of the Divine Nature, having escaped the Corruption that is in the World through Lust.

THAT we may be Partakers of the Nature of God! why were we not always so? Was not this the Distinction, the Essential Difference of Man, That he was made *in the Image, and after the Likeness of God?* (Gen. i. 26.) And was not this Image of God, or the Freedom of our Choice,

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the Holiness of our Will, and all the Impressions of universal Righteousness upon our Minds; were not these, I say, supported by Laws, and defended by such Assistances as were sufficient to preserve them?

Whence is it then that Man, the only Being upon Earth that understands himself, should be also the only Being that Rebels against the Law of his Creation? That he of all the rest should Degenerate, and become the Contempt and Scorn of Nature?

What shall we say? Has Providence overlook'd us? Has God forgotten us? Has He neglected the most Excellent Part of the Visible Creation, for whose sake the rest were made, and suffered it to be Lost? No surely! For *His Kingdom ruleth over all*; and *He upholdeth all things by the word of his Power*, (Heb. 1. 3.)

But *Peccability*, or that we may Chuse amiss, is implied in our Power of Chusing; and this, this Liberty, by us abused, is the only Cause of our Misery, our Shame, and Ruine.

For, notwithstanding all the Advantages of inward Impressions, and outward Revelations, yet the Generality of Men, by a Constant Conversation with Sensual Objects, destroy their Reason, and corrupt their Vertue, till their very Nature
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is Changed, till they are sunk and lost in an Inferiour, Wretched, Brutal Life.

But God, *who considers our frame, and remembers that we are but Men*, (Psal. 103. 14.) looks down upon us with Compassion, Invites us to return to our selves again, to our primitive Integrity, to all the Beauty of our first Creation; and encourages our Endeavours by the Manifestation of Himself, His *Power and Glory to us*, (ver. 2.) by Additional Rewards, by *exceeding great and precious Promises* in the Gospel of His Son. *Whereby, (or by whom) are given unto us exceeding great and precious Promises, That by these, (by the Power and Efficacy of these upon our Minds) we may be partakers of the Divine Nature, having escaped the Corruption that is in the World through Lust.*

Upon which Words, that I may discourse with the greater Plainness and Advantage, I shall endeavour to reduce their Sense, their whole Intention, into these following Propositions.

I. First, *That the Chief Design of the Gospel of our Saviour is, to make us Partakers of the Nature of God.*

II. Secondly, *That the only Means to attain this End, or the only Way to partake of the Nature of God, is to escape the Corruptions of the World, through Lust.*

III. Thirdly

III. Thirdly and Lastly, *That those exceeding great and precious Promises, which this most Holy Gospel hath assured to all who comply with its Design, are a sufficient Motive to us, to strive with all our Heart, to escape the Corruptions of the World, that we may partake of the Nature of God.*

I begin with the First of these, viz.

I. *That the Chief Design of the Gospel of our Saviour is, to make us Partakers of the Nature of God. Whereby are given unto us exceeding great and precious Promises, that by these, (or for this End, and to this Intent, that,) We may partake of the Divine Nature. That being provoked by a firm Belief, and a stedfast Expectation of these Rewards, we may aspire with all our Heart, after a Participation of the Nature of God.*

And for the Clearer Demonstration of this most useful Truth, I shall briefly proceed in this following Method.

1. First, *I shall take a view of the Nature of God in general, as far as it falls under our Conception.*

2. Secondly, *I shall consider in what Sense, and under what Limitations, we Frail and Mortal Men may be said to partake of the Nature of God.*

3. Thirdly,

3. Thirdly, and Lastly, *I shall endeavour to make it manifest, That thus to partake of the Nature of God, according to our Capacity, is the Ultimate End, and the Chief Design of the Christian Institution.*

1. First, *I shall take a view of the Nature of God in general, as far as it falls under our Conception.*

It is true indeed, the Divine *Hypostasis*, or the naked Essence of God, is far above out of our Reach; the more we pry into it, the more we shall be sensible of our Ignorance, our Vanity, and Rashness. We may Confound and Tire our Reason, but shall never Master and Subdue the Object. There is no Proportion between the Notion and the Faculty. No bounded Understanding can lay hold upon Infinity; no Created Being can trace the Footsteps of Eternal Ages, or fix his Thoughts upon a vast Immensity, without Repulse, without Confusion. And therefore in our Contemplation of God, the first Distinct, and Clear Conception that we frame, is this, That He is *Incomprehensible*.

But however, though our Mind is unequal to the Attributes of God; though we cannot contain or enjoy them, in their Infinite Degrees; yet by those little Glimmerings of Reason, by

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those Powers of inferring one thing from another, which we find in our selves, we certainly Know, in general, that He who is the Spring, the Principle, and Original of all Existence, from whom they derive, and in whom they resolve, is Himself endued with all Possibilities of Happiness and Perfection. For what can be hid from His Knowledge, or kept from his Possession, who is the Cause of *All* things?

God therefore is but One, Existing of Himself, intirely Independent, and under no Controul; His Being is Unchangeable, his Knowledge is Infinite, and his Duration is Eternal: He fills all Places with his Presence, and overrules all second Causes by an Almighty Power. His Will is always Pure and Holy, as it is Absolute and Free, determined to the best and wisest Ends, and managed by the most perfect Wisdom, Justice, Truth, and Goodness. His Decrees are Uncontroulable, the best in their Design, certain in their Event, without Possibility of ill Success.

These, and all things else that are better than their Contraries, are bound up in, and Inseparable from the Notion of God, who is Infinite in all Perfections.

2. But if this be the Nature of God, *How is it possible for us, poor, bounded, sinful, frail and mortal Men, to become Partakers of it?* And this is the Second Thing to be Considered.

And by the Account which has been given of the Nature of God, it appears, That some of his Attributes are so Absolute a Property, so Essential to the Deity, that they cannot be Imparted: They Exist intirely and solely in Himself.

That more than One should be ONE, or First, or Self-existent, the Cause of all things, Infinite, or Immenſe, is a Contradiction. Theſe, and ſome others, admit of no Degrees, and are therefore Incommunicable.

But however, there is ſomething of God in the very Nature of Man, Eſſential to us, and Inſeparable from us, which no other Part of the Viſible World can boaſt of.

For we move from our ſelves, in ſome degree, as God does; we act for the ſake of ſuch Ends, as we our ſelves propoſe. We Reaſon, Judge, Reflect, and are truly ſtyled a Conſcious Being. We penetrate the Dimensions of our Little World, and our Soul is preſent every where within her Bounds. And thus the humane Nature Reſembles the Divine;

Exemplumq; Dei quiſquis eſt in Imagine parva.

But this Assimilation is necessary, it is Inseparable from our Nature, and therefore cannot be the Subject-matter of a Law. Wherefore then, by a Participation of the Nature of God, when it is urged upon us as a Duty, or proposed as a worthy End, we understand a faint Resemblance, an imperfect Imitation of those Divine Perfections, which are Absolute only in God, but yet are Competent in a Good Degree to all his Reasonable Creatures; *Competent*, I say, not Necessary, or Essential to us: for then there would have been no Room for Choice or Vertue.

And thus, if we had not been wanting to our selves, we might have preserved, and, by the Grace of God, we may yet recover a fair Proportion of the Purity of His Mind, and the Holiness of his Will; of his Wisdom and Providence, of His Mercy and Justice, of His Truth and Goodness, with which our Nature was ennobled, and from which we so unhappily fell.

And this is the Participation of the Nature of God, which is made our Duty in the Text; It is the Imitation of those most Excellent Rules, by which he Governs the Freedom of his Choice, and Exercises His vast, unbounded Power.

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It is a good degree of that Universal Righteousness, which directs the Dispensations of His Providence, and knits them all together into the most Excellent Order and Agreement. And thus 'tis *μεθενωσία & θείας φύσεως*, a Participation of the Disposition of God, an Imitation of His Way, and manner of acting. It is to govern our selves in our narrow Sphere of Action, and in all Relations, according to His Example and Command. It is to subdue our Will to His, our *Inclinations* and Imperfect Reasonings, to His most perfect Methods of proceeding.

For it is not only to do what He Commands, but to Prefer it, to Love and Chuse our Duty; to be united to it, and in our Proportion and Capacity, to *be* what the Law Requires. To act by the same Principle, to move by the same Spirit, to entertain the same Opinions of what is Good and Evil, and in every thing to Conform our selves to his most perfect Reason. This is to partake of the Nature of God.

And, according to this Account, it is expressed in Scripture, by His *Image*, and His *Likeness*, (Gen. 1. 26.) and this Image of God upon our Souls, is explained by *Knowledge*, (Col. 3. 10.) By *Holiness of Life*, (Ephes. 4. 24.) By the *Mind* and Disposition of *God*, (Phil. 2. 5.) And, finally, *To abide*

abide in the Father, and in the Son, is to abide in the Practice of that which they had heard, and had been taught from the Beginning, (1 John 2. 24.)

And as for those places of Scripture, which denote a more Mysterious Union between the Souls of pious Men, and God, they are not understood as Declarations of our Duty, simply; but rather as the Rewards of a great Affection, and a zealous Vertue; or of those Divine Delights and Pleasures, which will fill the Minds of those who thus unite themselves to God. That is the Second.

3. I proceed to the Third and Last Particular, and shall endeavour to make it Manifest, *That thus to partake of the Nature of God, according to our Capacity, is the Ultimate End, and the Chief Design of the Christian Institution. Whereby are given unto us exceeding great and precious Promises, that, (or for this End that) by these, (by the mighty force of so great Rewards) we may be Partakers of the Divine Nature.*

The Religion then it self, is a Body of Principles, and Rules of Life, for the Restoration of our Nature to a Participation of the Nature of God. And the Promises annexed, are made subservient to this, as to their Last Design: *That by these we may be Partakers of the Nature of God.*

It

It was the Loss of our first Integrity, by unreasonable Will, and vicious Appetites; It was our falling short of the *Glory*, and defacing the *Image of God* upon our Souls, which was the Occasion of our Saviour's Manifestation in the World, That He, *the Seed of the Woman*, might break the *Serpent's head*, (Gen. 3. 15.) That by Him our Loss might be repaired, our Bruises healed, and our Decays recovered.

There can be therefore no Dispute, but His design is to destroy those Wicked and Ungodly Habits, in which our Misery Consists, and to restore us to the Government of our Reason, and the *Image of God* again, which was our Original Felicity.

The Gospel of our Saviour is *Salvation*, Health, and Redemption to Mankind; but we are not capable of *Salvation* any other way, but by the Reformation of our Manners, and the Raising of our Nature out of that Degenerate Condition it is in, to a Conformity with the Life of God.

For we cannot be happy but in the way of our Nature. And therefore if our Saviour had redeemed us from the Guilt and Punishment of our Sins, and not from our Iniquity, (which cannot be supposed) yet even this would have been no great Advantage; It could not properly be
called

called, *the bringing of Salvation to us*; Because we should have been the same Imperfect, Wretched Beings still, that we were before.

Thus Reason will perswade, That to *save* a Man, is to restore him to the Perfection of His Nature.

But why should we Consider the Probability of the thing in reason, when the Religion it self declares its own design so plainly, That it is Impossible we should mistake it.

(1.) For the Prophets of old, many Ages before it was revealed, have represented it, as a *Law of Righteousness, that should be seated in the inward parts, and purifie its Profelytes from all their filth*, (Jer. 31. 33.) Dan. 9. 24.)

(2.) And no sooner had our Saviour Himself begun to instruct the People in His Religion, but He lays down this as His First, His Fundamental Principle, *Except a man be born again he cannot see the Kingdom of God*, St. John 3. 3. and Verse 7. *Marvel not that I say unto you, (your Nature must be changed,) ye must be born again.*

(3.) And if we look into the Religion it self, what are all, or at least the greater Number of, the Duties there required, but so many several Parts of the *Image of God* which we have Lost? Are they not the Dispositions of His Mind, the Attributes

Attributes of His Will, and the Methods of His Providence, that, by the Practice of them, we may be *perfect as our Heavenly Father is perfect*, (St. Matth. 5. ult.)

(4.) And are not the Apostles particularly careful to instill this Principle into us, not only in the Text, but every where throughout their Epistles, that, *For this purpose the Son of God was manifested, that he might destroy the Works of the Devil?* (1 John 3. 8.) That *this is the Will of God*, this is the great design of the Gospel, *even your Sanctification?* (1 Thes. 4. 3.)

Do they not resolve the Substance of Christianity into this, That we *be followers of God*, (Eph. 5. 1.) That we *be Holy as God is Holy*, (1 Pet. 1. 20.) That *if we have heard Him, and learn'd Him, as the truth is in Jesus, we shall put off the Old Man, which is Corrupt, and be renewed, transformed, in the Spirit of our Mind; and put on the New Man, which is Created after God in Righteousness, and Holiness of Life?* (Ephes. 4. 24.)

(5.) And are not all true Christians, who have resigned themselves to the Direction of their Religion, are they not said to be *new Created?* (Eph. 2. 16.) *To be new Begotten?* (1 Joh. 5. 18.) *To be Joyned to the Lord, Adopted into His Family, and*

to become his Children? (1 Cor. 6. 17.) Joh. 17. 24. Rom. 8. 16.)

This then is the specific Difference of Christianity, that it rectifies our Nature, *and cleanses us throughout, in Body, Soul, and Spirit.*

And therefore if we are not thus renewed in Every Point, we may assume the Name, but, in truth, We are not Christians. *For the Foundation of God, says the Apostle, standeth sure, and has this Seal, Let every one that nameth the Name of Christ, depart from Iniquity, (2 Tim. 2. 19.)*

He then, upon whom the Gospel has not this Effect, He whose Nature is not changed, and whose Mind is not renewed, is not upon this Foundation. He is in the same Condition, at the present, as He would have been, if our Saviour never had appeared. For He is a Saviour only to those who obey Him, (*Heb. 10.*)

And thus it appears, That the End of the Promises, and of all that our Saviour did and taught, is this, *That we may be Partakers of the Nature of God.* And this is the First, and the Principal Assertion in the Text.

I proceed

I proceed to the Consideration of the Second ; namely this : viz.

II. Secondly, *That the only Means to attain this End, or the only Way to partake of the Nature of God, is, to escape the Corruptions that are in the World, thro' Lust. Having Escaped, or by the means of Escaping, the Corruptions of the World, we may be Partakers of the Divine Nature.* This is the plain Construction of the Words, and thus much they Import, at least ; That the Corruptions of the World, and the Nature of God, are Incompatible ; that they cannot subsist in the same Subject ; that we must be free from the one, before we can attain the other : That unless we Escape the Corruptions of the World, we cannot, but if we do Escape them, we shall attain, by the Grace of God, to a Participation of His Nature.

By the World, we understand, The Pleasures and Allurements of it ; or those Grateful Satisfactions that it yields to our Inferiour, Sensual Desires.

By the *Corruptions of the World*, we understand, Those vicious and destructive Habits, which we have brought upon our selves, by an Over-value, and an Inordinate Enjoyment of it. Or those ill Effects, which these Terrene and Sensual Pleasures have had upon us, in that they have imposed upon our Reason, Corrupted our Integrity, and Depraved our Nature.

The Soundness of the Mind consists in this, That we preserve the Authority of our Reason, that we Judge, and Chuse, and Love, and Enjoy, according to the Value of the Object, the Nature of the Thing, and the Command of God. That all our Faculties fulfill their End, and perfect their Design; That we gratifie all our Genuine Desires, and improve in all our Interests.

But to exceed these Measures, to neglect our greatest Good, to make no use of our Noblest Powers, to starve our Best Capacities, on the one hand; and to load and nauseate our Inferior Appetites, on the other; to be governed by them, and resolved into them, is the Depravity, the *Corruption* of a Reasonable Creature. The Humane Nature, or our Powers of Judging truly, of Loving wisely, and of Acting freely, are destroyed.

So

So that all the several Instances of sensual and worldly Pleasures, that overcome our Reason, and gain a *Dominion over us*, are styled in the Text, by an easie Metaphor, *The Corruption that is in the World, through Lust*, or through the Power of Inordinate Desire.

Wherefore then, to *Escape* the Corruptions of the World, is to Rectifie our Judgment, and Reform our Manners; to Change our Affections, and Flee from all the Baits and Opportunities of Vicious Actions. To recede from all our former Notions of our Happiness, and from all our Consequent Affections, Desires, and Course of Life; and attain to another Sense of things, to a Right Opinion, to Suitable Desires, to a Cheerful Will, and Vigorous Endeavours, Informed and Governed by the Will of God. It is to recover the True, the Natural, and the Perfect Temper of our Minds, which is corrupted by the Pleasures of the World; and to enjoy those Pleasures, for the time to come, in such Degrees and Measures, as may consist with the Laws of Reason, and the Safety of all our Interests.

And though it is not possible for us, to preserve our selves in a Continued Course, of perfect Health. Though we cannot keep the Balance

lance always, and exactly, even between the Soul and the Body, in this Imperfect State; Yet we may attain to a perfect Soundness both of Judgment and Affection. We may Resolve our Happiness into our Duty; we may both understand and hate the turpitude of Vice; We may frame a steady Resolution to Escape it; We may always stand upon our Guard; And whensoever we are Polluted, (*For in many things we all offend,*) we may Cleanse our selves, as soon as we discern it, by a true Repentance. This is to *Escape the Corruptions of the World*, according to the Measure and Capacity of a Man.

And that thus to *Escape the Corruptions of the World*, is the only way to *become Partakers of the Nature of God*, is evident beyond Exception.

For a State of Bondage to the Corruptions of the World, is the Sensual, the Brutal Nature, that pursues the present Appetite without Respect. It is directly contrary to the Laws of Reason, or the Nature of God, and is therefore inconsistent with it.

But to Assert our Liberty, to Escape from under their Dominion, to throw off all those evil Habits, which we have superinduced upon our selves, will raise our Minds again, and
restore

restore us to the same Condition we were in before.

A Participation of the Nature of God, is our First, and Perfect Temper; This we Corrupted by the Pleasures of the World; But if we *Escape the Corruptions of the World*, we recover our selves again, and are, *ipso facto*, re-invested in the Nature of God. We return of Course, to all the Pleasures and Advantages of our former State.

And thus it appears, *That the only way to become Partakers of the Nature of God, is, to Escape the Corruption that is in the World, through Lust.* And this is the Second Proposition.

I proceed, but very briefly, to the Third and Last, *viz.*

III. *That those exceeding great and precious Promises, which are Assured to all who comply with the Design of the Gospel, and become Partakers of the Nature of God, are a sufficient Motive to us, to use the Means, which are prescribed, or, to Escape the Corruptions of the World.* Or,

That the Rewards Proposed are a Reasonable Inducement, as well to pursue the End it self, as
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to use the Means in order to it; *That Escaping the Corruptions of the World, we may partake of the Nature of God.*

The Possessions, the Glories, and the Pleasures of the World, are so Exceeding grateful to Corrupted Appetites, and so Conducive to our Mistaken Interests, that they prejudice our Minds, and stop our Ears, against the Just Advice of those who would perswade us, That our Sense is Vitiated, and our Pleasures are Deceitful; that they are Mischievous to us at the present, and will be Fatal in the Issue.

And therefore nothing less, than a positive Command, back'd with the Sanction of the severest Punishment, and the Promise of a great Reward; of Pleasures far superiour to those we now enjoy, supposing they were indeed, what they seem to us, will ever reduce us to a sober Sense, or perswade us to deny our selves, and *Escape the Corruptions of the World.*

But such are the Promises annexed to the Religion of our Saviour, they are so Great, so Exceeding precious, that they ought to carry all before them. There is nothing can compare with them, and therefore, if we have any Sense, we shall forbear, or do, or suffer any thing, that we may attain them.

Let

Let us but consider what they are, and how they support their Character, and we shall be forced to grant, That the Motive is Irresistible.

From the very moment then, that we *Escape the Corruptions of the World*, we enter upon another, and a better Life; upon a State of the most perfect Happiness, which shall Improve upon us, and Continue to Eternity.

It is perfected, indeed, in Heaven, but it begins on Earth, and we shall feel the mighty Advantages of the Change, even in this Imperfect State.

For now our Nature is restored, our Infirmities are healed, and our Sins are pardoned; our *Souls are now refreshed*, our Conscience is at Ease, our Minds are raised, and we may come with Boldness to the Throne of Grace, (Matth. 11. ult.) Ephes. 3. 12.) An humble Confidence, and a perfect Love shall banish all our Fears, (1 John. 4. 18.)

We now shall pass from one degree of Grace unto another, till we come to the fulness of the Stature of Christ; till we are settled in a Blessed Hope; till our Assurance shall be full, (Heb. 6. 11.) Ephes. 4. 13.)

Now we shall be under the Protection of the Holy Spirit; He shall direct and guide us through all the Dangers of This present Life; prevent Temptations, assist us in them, and find out a way for our *Escape*, (John 16. 1 Cor. 10. 13.)

Whatsoever we need shall be supplied; *whatsoever we ask we shall receive*, (Mat. 7. Luk. 11. 9.) whatsoever we are capable of receiving, we shall Enjoy. For we are united now to God Himself, (John 10. 35.) We are *his Temples*, His peculiar place of Residence, (1 Cor. 3. 17.) But oh! what sensible Touches of Unspeakable Pleasures; what Resolution, what Alacrity of Spirit, what Ecstasies of Joy, what Irradiations of Love, must needs arise from such a Presence of God upon the Mind! What a perfect Contentation in Life; what Hope, what Chearfulness in Death!

For, indeed, to *Die is Gain*, (Phil. 1. 21.) it is an Improvement still of the Life of God. It brings us to the *Euge, bone Serve! Well done, good and faithful Servant, enter thou into the Joy of thy Lord*, (St. Mat. 25. 21.) Into those Inexpressible Joys, which *Eye hath never seen, nor ear has heard, nor can it enter into the heart of man to conceive*, (1 Cor. 2. 9.) For now we shall be cloathed upon with *Immortality*, (2 Cor. 5. 2.) and possessed of an exceeding weight of *Glory*, (2 Cor. 4. 17.)

Now

Now shall all our Faculties be enlarged, and filled; for *we shall see him as he is, and know even as we are known*, (1 John 3. 2.)

Here we shall converse for ever with the Holy Angels, with the Pure and Immaculate Spirits of the Just, (*Heb. 12. 23.*) Nay, with God Himself, and our Blessed Saviour, (*St. John 17.*) Their Glories shall be now *revealed*; Their Brightness shall encompass us, and the Returns of our Love and Adoration of them shall transport us; *in whose presence there is fulness of joy, and at whose right hand there are pleasures for evermore*, (*Psal. 16. 11.*)

These then are *exceeding great and precious Promises*; they are the *Summum Genus*, they are Absolute and Perfect; they are capable of no Improvement, nothing can be added to them, that can set a greater Value upon them.

For are not all things precious, according as they approach to the Nature of God, from whom all Beauty and Goodness is derived? But are not all these Promises *Divine*? Do they not assure us of an Everlasting Union and Communion with Himself? (*John 10. 30. 17. 22.*) But surely there is a great deal more implied in this, than we are able so much as to conceive.

For why should the Unity of our Souls with God, be expressed in Scripture, by the Unity of the *Head and Members*, (Col. 1. 18.) of the *Vine and Branches*, (St. John 15. 1.) of the *Soul and Body*, of the *Husband and Wife*, (Eph. 5. 23.) and finally, of *God and our Blessed Saviour*, (John 17.) Or why should it be called a *Mystery* by St. Paul, (Eph. 5. 32.) if there was not something in it, that is above our humane Understanding?

And hence it is, that in the Meditation upon those Effects, which may proceed from such a perfect Sympathy, and an entire Consent of Will with God, we run our selves, indeed, into the most Delightful, but *Indistinct* Imaginations.

Shall we not, then, *Escape the Corruptions of the World*? Shall we not forbear, or do, or suffer any thing, that we may Entitle our selves to these *exceeding great and precious Promises*.

Are our Vices of Inestimable Value? Are our Corruptions so Amiable, so Necessary to us, that nothing will perswade us to let them go? Shall these Unequal, Allayed, Deceitful, Transient, Mixt, Unsatisfactory Pleasures, be put in the Balance, with a *Crown of Glory*, (1 Pet. 5. 4.) an *Incorruptible Inheritance*, an *Everlasting Kingdom*? (1 Pet. 1. 4.)

Shall

Shall a Man be Content to lose his Interest in an Eternal Good, and the Greatest too that he is capable of Receiving, that he may only enjoy the Delusions of a Frenzy, or the Pleasures of a Dream for the present?

Are not such Proceedings against our Common Sense? Are they not foolish even to Derision?

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Let us be persuaded then, to submit to the Evidence of Reason, and sacrifice our Vices to the Conviction of our Consciences. How can we enough Adore the Goodness of God, who has allured us by *exceeding great and precious Promises*, to the Obedience of those Commands, which are themselves our greatest Good? Who has made those things our Duty, which also fit us for the true Enjoyment of those Rewards, which are annexed to our Obedience?

Finally, Since our Religion is our Interest, and the Rewards proposed are so transcendent, so much greater than we our selves could have desired, I hope we are all Resolved, *to escape the Corruptions of the World, that we may partake of the Nature of God.*

We

We cannot be happy so long as our Dispositions are Contrary to His; so long as we are disjointed and separate from our Principle.

There is nothing here below, that is large enough to fill the Capacity of a Man. Nothing but God, the Inexhaustible Fountain of Good, can yield us a steady and a constant Satisfaction. But in him there are Infinite Varieties of Indefectible Treasures; His Favour will afford us fresh Delights, and preserve us in a perfect State Everlasting Happiness.

To which, may God, of his Infinite Mercy, bring us all, for Jesus Christ his Sake, the Righteous; To whom, with the Father, and the Holy Ghost, be all Honour, Glory, and Praise, now, and for evermore, Amen.

F I N I S.

